

MARK 3420 Consumer Behavior
(Autumn Semester 2017)
Sections L2 & L3
Course Syllabus
Version 24 August 2017

INSTRUCTOR

Professor Roberta GIANNINI

Office : LSK 4016B
Phone : 2358-7697
Email : mkroberta@ust.hk
Office hours : Fridays 2:00– 3:00 PM
and by appointment

INSTRUCTIONAL ASSISTANT

Pauline CHAN

Office : LSK 4025
Phone : 2358-7705
Email : paulinechan@ust.hk
by appointment

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this course is to study the process of consumer decision making and its determinants, and the resulting implications for marketing strategy. Concepts and theories covered in this course are essential for consumer analysis and the development of effective marketing strategies. A strategic orientation will permeate most facets of this course. At the same time, knowledge of consumer behavior requires an understanding of important theoretical concepts borrowed from fields such as psychology, sociology, economics etc. Accordingly, while marketing applications will be stressed throughout, you may expect this course to be a little heavier in theory than other marketing courses.

TEXTBOOK AND LEARNING RESOURCES

Solomon, Michael R. *Consumer Behavior: Buying, Having, and Being* (12th edition), Pearson Education, 2017.

Supplementary reading materials will be occasionally assigned. It is the responsibility of students to search and reproduce a hardcopy of the relevant material if necessary. Videoclips, on the other hand, will only be shown in class once and will not be kept in the library. It is important, therefore, that students attend all lecture sessions so as not to miss any video material.

CLASS SCHEDULE

| Section | Lecture | Venue | Tutorials* |
|-----------|--|----------|-----------------------------------|
| L2 | 1:30 – 2:50 PM, M 9:00 – 10:20 AM, F | LSK 1005 | 6:00- 6:50 PM Tuesdays (G012 LSK) |
| L3 | 4:30 – 5:50 PM, M 12:00 n – 01:20 PM, F | LSK 1003 | |

*Tuesday evening tutorials will be used for consultations with individual students and / or groups concerning class projects/ activities, and for make-up class sessions as necessary (Please watch out for announcements). Mid-term tests will also be scheduled during tutorial periods. SO, there will be no clashes with any other course.

EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS

I expect you to be an active thinker, reader, observer and doer. Several of the ideas presented in this course were developed in Western countries in the expectation that basic theories of human behavior would apply to human beings all over the world. Throughout this course, I would like you to be alert to any differences you may note between what is taught, and what you have observed from your own experience as a consumer in Hong Kong/Asia, and raise these issues for discussion in class.

COURSEWORK COMPONENTS

The coursework requirements for this course are listed below:

| <i>Coursework</i> | <i>Weighting (%)</i> | <i>Nature of Activity</i> |
|--|----------------------|---------------------------|
| Term Test 1 | 20 | Individual |
| Term Test 2 | 20 | Individual |
| Project Written Report | 15 | Group (peer-assessed) |
| Project Presentation | 15 | Group (peer-assessed) |
| Research Exercise | 10 | Group (peer-assessed) |
| Class Participation/ Cases/ In-class Exercises | 20 | Individual |
| Research Participation | 2* | <i>Individual</i> |

* *Students enrolled in MARK3420 are required to earn 2 research credits (worth 2% of the course grade). This can be done through participation in 2 marketing experiments (of 1 hour each) OR by completing 2 research assignments. This is a departmental policy, and non-compliance with this requirement, or any part thereof, will merit a corresponding percentage-point deduction from the student's final grade. For example, If the student completes only 1 hour of experiment, then 1 percentage-point will be deducted from his/ her final course grade. If he misses all 2 hours, then 2 percentage-points will be taken off his/ her final course grade.*

Scores on each of the above components will be summed to arrive at an overall score for each student. Based on this overall score, grades will be assigned based on the School's grade distribution policy.

Term Tests

There will be 2 term tests at various points during the semester. The tests will primarily consist of objective questions, such as multiple-choice and fill in the blanks, plus short essay/ problem solving. All the questions will be based exclusively on assigned chapter readings and class lectures. There will typically be no carry over of substantive topics for the quizzes. However, it should be kept in mind that most topics in the course are interrelated; thus, answering questions relating to a particular topic may require some knowledge of topics discussed earlier.

Term tests have been scheduled during the **evening hours (6:00-7:30 PM)** on the test dates that are reflected in the timetable. The test dates fall on Tuesdays (tutorial evenings for our classes), so there is no excuse to miss any of the tests as there should be no timetable clash with any other course.

Note: Make-up test arrangements can only be made with a valid medical excuse, in which case a medical certificate should be presented.

Research Exercise

The purpose of this exercise is to help you appreciate how consumer behavior is not an abstract subject that exists only as definitions in your textbook. This assignment requires you to use your skills as a consumer researcher, analyzing some specific consumer activities as they happen around you. Details are on a separate document on CANVAS. Deadline for submission is listed on the timetable of activities at the end of this document.

Group Project

Students are required to form groups consisting of **either four or five members each** (*I will grant no exceptions to this rule*). We will conduct a group self-selection exercise in class. Each group has to fill in the Group formation sheet with a list of its members (names, student IDs and email addresses) by the date listed on the timetable at the end of this document.

The project is briefly described below. More detailed instructions will be provided later.

Project details: Consumer Perception: Blind product test. The purpose of the project is to provide students an experience about research tools used in consumer research. The project will involve data collection and analysis, and development of marketing repercussions. For the project, students will have to submit a written report and make an oral presentation in class. The written reports and the oral presentations of the projects will be reviews of the group's investigation and evaluations.

Assignment: Assume that your group has been hired as a consultant to the marketer of a particular brand within this product category, to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the brand relative to the competition. Conduct a “blind” test for at least two brands of any one product, such that participants evaluate the product without seeing the brand name. This can be a taste test, but you can also evaluate a non-food product (face creams, perfums, paper towels, etc.). You may consider comparing “premium” brands to one or more generic brands. Do not test any alcoholic beverages or medications! Define two different segments of 10 people each (20 people total for each group) to participate. It is important is that you have a good prior reason for believing that these two segments differ in some important respect in terms of their preferences or opinions about the product category you have chosen. Without telling them the identity of the brands, ask them for their impressions of each product they try. Get overall ratings (i.e. 1 to 5) of how much participants liked each sample, but also get ratings specific to the dimension you’re testing (for a taste test, ask a few different questions about flavours; if you were testing perfums, you might instead ask a few questions about fragrance and fixation). When participants are finished, you might also ask which product they liked best and/or worst.

To conduct this test, you must:

- 1) decide on the product category
- 2) define the two different segments (e.g.: gender, social class, age, lifestyle)
- 3) decide on the main independent variable(s) – IV, (i.e., which dimensions of the product you are going to manipulate)
- 4) decide on the main dependent variable(s) – DV (i.e., where you expect the independent variable(s) to have an impact on – e.g., quality, number of calories, willingness to pay etc.)
- 5) conduct the blind test
- 6) apply a questionnaire after the test

For example, you can plan to test the impact of package color—Independent Variable— on consumer perception of water quality—Dependent Variable. You then expose 50% of the sample to the “black package” and 50% to the “green package”—the two conditions of the independent variable that you decided to used— and test whether package color influences participants’ perception of water quality.

Analysis: Construct a questionnaire containing scales to measure: a) beliefs about the brand under study and one other competitive brand and b) the importance of each attribute. Your questionnaire should contain questions, such as product impressions, as well as demographic questions relating to age, marital status, occupation, etc. Administer the questionnaire to two distinct segments of 10 people each (total number of questionnaires = 20). Analyze the responses to the questionnaire using simple software such as Excel or SPSS. Which brand, if any, emerged as the favorite? How did you determine this? Is the favorite generally a popular brand, or were you surprised by the winner? If a consumer had a favorite before sampling, was that brand typically his/her favorite in the blind test? Did the results differ for different groups of consumers (e.g., men vs. women; frequent vs. infrequent consumers of the product)? What are the implications of this test for the marketing strategies of the

brands you tested?

Based on your analysis, prepare a report that should cover the following two major questions:

1. What are your brand's strengths and weaknesses based on the blind tests? (criteria you can use: overall attitude scores; ratings on each individual attribute; recall scores, etc.)
2. Based on your answer to the above question, what recommendations can you make to the brand's company?

Page Limit for Report: 10 double spaced typed pages in Times Roman (11 Point), including tables and appendices, with 1 inch border on all sides. This limit is to be strictly followed.

Due Dates: See timetable at the end of this document. No late report will be accepted

- Hard copy handed in class prior to the commencement of the class.
- Soft copy submitted through CANVAS

Project Presentation

Each group will be required to make an oral presentation of the report in class. Each presentation should take about 10 minutes and a further 5 minutes for a question-answer session. Attendance is mandatory at all presentations, and every group may be required to mark every presentation (including their own).

Presentation slides of all groups should be uploaded on CANVAS not later than the time and date listed on the timetable at the end of this document. Once submitted, no changes may be made in the slides.

Class Participation

The classroom experience is very important in your learning process. In addition to lectures, time will be allocated to in-class group exercises. These exercises will be in the form of small caselets (written or video), or discussion questions that will be handed out in class. Each group of students will then get some time (10-15 minutes) to discuss the assignment with one another. Following this, I will ask one group to provide the solution to the assignment. The other groups will be expected to add their comments and join in a discussion of the assignment. *In order to facilitate this type of discussion, each group of students is required to sit together for all lectures. Group participation points will only be given to members of the group who are present for the discussion.* All students are required to display a card kept in front of them **during class**, containing their group number and their name (We will provide the name card).

All members of the same group will receive the same marks for the in-class exercises. There will **also** be individual class participation points – i.e., marks given for individual comments and answers to questions asked in class. Individual class participation will be graded on a scale from 0 (lowest) through 4 (highest points), using the criteria below. The criteria focus on what you demonstrate and do not presume to guess at what you know but do not demonstrate.

| Points | Criteria |
|---------------|---|
| 0 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Absent. |
| 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Present, not disruptive.• Tries to respond when called on but does not offer much.• Demonstrates very infrequent involvement in discussion. |
| 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrates adequate preparation: knows basic case or reading facts, but does not show evidence of trying to interpret or analyze them.• Offers straightforward information (e.g., straight from the case or reading), without elaboration or very infrequently (perhaps once a class).• Does not offer to contribute to discussion, but contributes to a moderate degree when called on.• Demonstrates sporadic involvement. |
| 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrates good preparation: knows case or reading facts well, has thought through implications of them.• Offers interpretations and analysis of case material (more than just facts) |

| | |
|---|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributes well to discussion in an ongoing way: responds to other students' points, thinks through own points, questions others in a constructive way, offers and supports suggestions that may be counter to the majority opinion. • Demonstrates consistent ongoing involvement. |
| 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates excellent preparation: has analyzed case exceptionally well, relating it to readings and other material (e.g., readings, course material, discussions, experiences, etc.). • Offers analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of case material, e.g., puts together pieces of the discussion to develop new approaches that take the class further. • Contributes in a very significant way to ongoing discussion: keeps analysis focused, responds very thoughtfully to other students' comments, contributes to the cooperative argument-building, suggests alternative ways of approaching material and helps class analyze which approaches are appropriate, etc. • Demonstrates ongoing very active involvement. |

Research credit

Students enrolled in this class are expected to earn 2 research credits (worth 2% of the grade). This can be done through participation in 2 *marketing experiments* (of 1 hour each) OR by completing 2 *research assignments*.

Marketing *experiments* will be scheduled throughout the semester and students can sign up for these experiments. Instructions on how to sign up will be given to you once the add/drop period is over. You will receive an email giving you the instruction. Instructions will also be posted on your course website. (It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with the procedures so you are notified of experiments when they are posted). Note that all research experiments begin on time and if you are late, you will miss your chance. If you sign up and then fail to show up (and this occurs several times), you might be blocked from further participation.

If you choose to do research *assignments*, you can pick them up from the Marketing Department Office (pick-up schedule to be announced). These assignments can be turned in on the last day of class to the **MARKETING MAIN OFFICE**. Please do not give it to me (your instructor) since they are evaluated by the department.

Note that the department requires that students earn 2 research credits for each marketing elective that they are enrolled in. Given that a few of you are enrolled in multiple marketing electives, the department has placed a cap on the number of research credits (experiments/assignments) you have to do. The maximum that each student does is 4 experiments/assignments. Thus, if you are enrolled in three marketing classes, you do NOT have to do 6 experiments or 6 assignments.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity is a critical value of the university community. Integrity violations destroy the fabric of a learning community and the spirit of inquiry that is vital to the effectiveness the University. I have absolutely no tolerance for cheating and there are no acceptable excuses. Anyone caught cheating or plagiarizing in any form will fail the class. Plagiarism is copying anything from another source without citing that source.

Assignments identified as individual tasks must be completed without the assistance of others. For assignments identified as group work, it is expected that all members of the group will have contributed to the final output, and that only members of the group will have contributed to that output. A group may not collaborate with a group from another section of the course.

Extreme care must be taken to avoid passing of other's work as one's own. You are required to provide appropriate citations when you use ideas and arguments or otherwise draw on others' work.

Tests are to be written without the assistance of notes, other material, or the help of others during the exercise.

In general, any student who violates academic integrity, through such activities as duplication of another students' work in whole or in part, plagiarism, etc. or other means of cheating, will receive an F for the course. There is no honor in taking someone's work as your own.

The HKUST Academic Integrity site can be accessed at <http://www.ust.hk/vpaa0/integrity/>

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Your professor makes strong efforts to make the class a comfortable and productive experience for everyone. Students are expected to do their part in maintaining such pleasant classroom environment.

- Please arrive on time. If you must be late, please minimize disturbance by arriving quietly.
- Please avoid leaving the classroom unless the class is finished.
- Switch off your mobile phones.
- Observe courtesy. Maintain silence when the class is in progress.
- In the event that a wireless connection to the internet is available in the classroom, you are expected not to connect to the internet except for course-related materials (i.e., lmes course material download).

MARK 3420- L2, L3 TENTATIVE TIMETABLE (v 24 AUGUST 2017)

| Dates | Topics | Text Ch | Notes/ Comments |
|---|---|----------------|--|
| 01 Sep (F) | Course Introduction | | |
| 04 Sep (M) | Consumer Behavior: An Introduction | 1 | |
| 08 Sep (F) | Customer Decision-Making Process Problem Recognition, Information Search | 9 | |
| 11 Sep (M) | Customer Decision-Making Process Evaluation of Alternatives, Product Choice | 9 | |
| 15 Sep (F) | Situational Effects Purchase and Postpurchase Activities | 10 | Group list finalized on 15 Sep (F) |
| 18 Sep (M) | Motivation and Affect | 5 | |
| 22 Sep (F) | Learning | 4 | |
| 25 Sep (M) | Memory | 4 | |
| 29 Sep (F) | Perception | 3 | |
| 02 Oct (M) | <i>National Day holiday</i> | | |
| 03 Oct (T) | Term Test 1 (6:00- 7:30 PM) | | Test 1 covers Ch 1, 3, 4, 5, 9, 10. |
| 06 Oct (F) | Culture | 14 | |
| 09 Oct (M) | <i>No Class (Test 1 on Friday 06 October)- Work on Research Exercise</i> | | |
| 13 Oct (F) | Subculture | 13 | Research Exercise due- on 13 October IN-CLASS Group Project Topic Submission Form due on 13 October IN-CLASS |
| 16 Oct (M) | Income and Social Class | 12 | |
| 20 Oct (F) | The Self | 6 | |
| 23 Oct (M) | Personality, Lifestyles, and Value | 7 | |
| 27 Oct (F) | Attitudes | 8 | |
| 30 Oct (M) | Persuasive Communications | 8 | |
| 03 Nov (F) | Research Exercise IN-CLASS | | |
| 06 Nov (M) | 06 November is CONSULTATION DAY to work on Group Project | | |
| 07 Nov (T) | Term Test 2 (6:00- 7:30 PM) | | Test 2 covers Ch 6, 7, 8, 12, 13, 14. |
| 10 Nov (F) | Groups and Social Media | 11 | |
| 13 Nov (M) | Consumer and Social Well-Being | 2 | |
| 17 Nov (F) 20 Nov (M) | Group Presentations (Attendance Required) Group Presentations (Attendance Required) | | Presentation slides and hard copy of written report uploaded on CANVAS not later than 1:00 PM on 16 November (Thursday) . Group project (written report- hard copy) due on 17 November (Friday) before class starts. |
| 24 Nov (F) 27 Nov (M) Last day of classes | Group Presentations (Attendance Required) Group Presentations (Attendance Required) Conclusion: Review | | |